

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9999

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

S E C R E T LONDON 05331

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PFOR, US, PO

SUBJECT: PORTUGAL - APPROACH TO ELLIOTT ROOSEVELT FOR
PRIVATE CHANNEL TO USG

DEPARTMENT FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN
LISBON FOR AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI

1. ELLIOTT ROOSEVELT CALLED ON ME APRIL 7. HE RECENTLY ARRIVED IN THE UK FROM PORTUGAL WHERE HE HAS BEEN LIVING AND HAS BUSINESS INTERESTS. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A MR. TONY LEWIS, HIS LONDON SOLICITOR. ROOSEVELT REPORTED THAT A LISBON ATTORNEY, DR. MANUEL SALEMA, WHO REPRESENTS ROOSEVELT'S LEGAL INTERESTS IN PORTUGAL, TOLD ROOSEVELT AT LUNCH THE OTHER DAY THAT CARVALHO WHO, SALEMA CLAIMS, IS A CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND, IS STILL DEFENSIVE ABOUT THE INCIDENT AFTER THE MARCH 11 COUP ATTEMPT IN WHICH HE HAD WARNED AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI THAT HE COULD NOT PERSONALLY GUARANTEE HIS SAFETY. ACCORDING TO SALEMA, CARVALHO IS BEARISH ABOUT THE LONG TERM PROSPECTS FOR PORTUGAL, IS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GOVERNMENT, AND FEARS THAT THE SITUATION MAY DEGENERATE INTO CHAOS LEADING TO COMMUNIST DOMINATION OF THE COUNTRY. SALEMA DESCRIBED CARVALHO AS AMBITIOUS WITH HIS EYE ON THE PREMIERSHIP.

2. SALEMA SAID SPECIFICALLY THAT CARVALHO WOULD LIKE TO
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OPEN UP A NON-OFFICIAL CHANNEL TO THE US GOVERNMENT BUT

APPARENTLY DID NOT SPECIFY ANY PARTICULAR OBJECTIVE WHICH THAT CHANNEL MIGHT SERVE. ACCORDING TO SALEMA, CARVALHO DID NOT FEEL THAT HE COULD USE OUR EMBASSY IN LISBON FOR THAT PURPOSE. ROOSEVELT SAID THAT SALEMA EVIDENTLY HAD HIM IN MIND AS A CHANNEL TO THE US GOVERNMENT BUT ROOSEVELT POINTED OUT TO ME THAT HE HAD NO CONNECTIONS WITH THE US ADMINISTRATION AND IN ANY EVENT WANTED TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE IN VIEW OF WHAT HE CONSIDERED HIS OWN VULNERABLE POSITION IN PORTUGAL.

3. ROOSEVELT CONTINUED THAT HE DID NOT FEEL THAT HE COULD IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES CALL AT THE US EMBASSY IN LISBON TO PASS ON THIS INFORMATION, BUT THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT TO COMMUNICATE IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO THE US AUTHORITIES -- HENCE HIS CALL ON ME. ROOSEVELT INDICATED THAT HE FULLY APPRECIATED THAT ANY ARRANGEMENT WHICH BYPASSED AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI WOULD BE OBJECTIONABLE, AND HE THEREFORE SUGGESTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR MIGHT CONSIDER GETTING IN TOUCH WITH SALEMA QUIETLY TO SEE EXACTLY WHAT HE HAD ON HIS MIND AND WHAT CARVALHO ENVISAGED BY WAY OF A PRIVILEGED INFORMAL CHANNEL TO THE US GOVERNMENT. ROOSEVELT ALSO SUGGESTED THAT SALEMA HIMSELF MIGHT BE THAT CHANNEL. LEWIS SAID SALEMA IS A MEMBER OF ONE OF THE LEADING LAW FIRMS OF LISBON WHICH WAS HEADED BY ONE DR. PEREIRA WHO HAD CLOSE LINKS WITH THE PREVIOUS REGIME AND IS NOW LIVING IN SWITZERLAND. SALEMA IS REPORTEDLY AN ANGLOPHILE AND A CONVINCED SOCIALIST BUT NOT A COMMUNIST.

4. COMMENT: I NATURALLY DID NOT FEEL THAT I COULD OFFER ANY COMMENT ON WHAT ROOSEVELT AND LEWIS HAD TO SAY BEYOND THANKING THEM FOR THEIR CALL AND STATING THAT I WOULD REPORT THEIR INFORMATION TO WASHINGTON.

RICHARDSON

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NNN

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